

**STATEMENT BY SECRETARY HAGEL ON THE PAY OUR
MILITARY ACT
SATURDAY, OCTOBER 5, 2013**

Today I am announcing that most DoD civilians placed on emergency furlough during the government shutdown will be asked to return to work beginning next week.

Immediately after President Obama signed the Pay Our Military Act into law, I directed DoD's Acting General Counsel to determine whether we could reduce the number of civilian personnel furloughed due to the shutdown. The Department of Defense consulted closely with the Department of Justice, which expressed its view that the law does not permit a blanket recall of all civilians. However, DoD and DOJ attorneys concluded that the law does allow the Department of Defense to eliminate furloughs for employees whose responsibilities contribute to the morale, well-being, capabilities and readiness of service members.

Consequently, I am now directing the Military Departments and other DoD components to move expeditiously to identify all employees whose activities fall under these categories. I expect us to be able to significantly reduce – but not eliminate – civilian furloughs under this process. Employees can expect to hear more information from their managers starting this weekend.

We have tried to exempt as many DoD civilian personnel as possible from furloughs. We will continue to try to bring all civilian employees back to work as soon as possible. Ultimately, the surest way to end these damaging and irresponsible furloughs, and to enable us to fulfill our mission as a Department, is for Congress to pass a budget and restore funds for the entire federal government.

This has been a very disruptive year for our people – including active duty, National Guard and reserve personnel, and DoD civilians and contractors. Many important activities remain curtailed while the shutdown goes on. Civilians under furlough face the uncertainty of not knowing when they will next receive a paycheck. I strongly support efforts in Congress to enact legislation to retroactively compensate all furloughed employees. And I will continue to urge Congress to fulfill its basic responsibilities to pass a budget and restore full funding for the Department of Defense and the rest of the government.

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